

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
FDRE-00 HEW-04 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 HA-05 CA-01
ICA-11 EB-08 IO-13 /081 W
-----002651 201417Z /43

P R 201315Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7156
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0694

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, PEDR, SWEL, TBIO, BY

SUBJ: BURUNDI REQUESTS ASSISTANCE AGAINST CHOLERA THREAT

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER SUMMONED, U.S., WEST GERMAN AND
BELGIAN AMBASSADORS AND FRENCH CHARGE TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE IN ANI-
CHOLERA CAMPAIGN PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF DANGER OF INTRODUCTION
OF THE DISEASE FROM KIVU PROVINCE IN ZAIRE. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION
FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES AGREED BURUNDI ANTI-CHOLERA CAMPAIGN TO
DATE HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE, DANGER OF INFECTION FROM ZAIRE WAS REAL
BUT BURUNDI REQUEST VAGUE. THEY WILL CONSULT FURTHER WITH
BELGIAN MEDICAL EXPERT ON WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP AND AFTER
THAT WE SHALL HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEPARTMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER MUGANGA SUMMONED WEST GERMAN, BELGIAN AND
U.S. AMBASSADORS AND FRENCH CHARGE JUNE 20 TO ASK US TO PROVIDE
MEDICATIONS OR FUNDS TO ASSIST ANTI-CHOLERA CAMPAIGN AND TO
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SENSITIZE ZAIRE AUTHORITIES TO CHOLERA DANGER. HE SAID HE HAD
SUMMONED US ALL TOGETHER BECAUSE OUR COUNTRIES HAD GOOD RELATIONS
WITH ZAIRE.

2. I ASKED MUGANGA IF WE WERE TO UNDERSTAND THAT BURUNDI AND
ZAIRE HAD NOT DISCUSSED THIS PROBLEM. HE REPLIED THEY HAD DISCUSSED
IT ON TECHNICAL LEVEL BUT ZAIROIS HAD NOT YET REPLIED TO INVITATION

TO DISCUSS AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

3. MUGANGA SUMMARIZED CHOLERA PROBLEM THUS FAR IN BURUNDI. HE POINTED OUT ORIGINAL CASES INTRODUCED FROM KIGOMA, TANZANIA TO RUMONGE BUT THAT BURUNDIAN AND TANZANIAN EFFORTS HAD DEALT WITH DANGER FROM THIS DIRECTION. SUBSEQUENTLY CASES WERE INTRODUCED FROM KALEMIE, ZAIRE, AND CONTINUED PREVALENCE IN KIVU AREA POSED SERIOUS THREAT TO BURUNDI SINCE LEVEL OF RUZIZI RIVER WAS LOW AND PEOPLE COULD CROSS EASILY. THERE HAD BEEN TOTAL OF 207 CASES IN BURUNDI TO DATE AND GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT 29,000,000 FRANCS, NOT COUNTING COST OF VEHICLE OPERATION, ON ANTI-CHOLERA CAMPAIGN. GOVERNMENT HAD URGENT NEE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND MONEY TO CONTINUE CAMPAIGN. EMBASSIES COULD CONTACT HEALTH MINISTRY DIRECTLY FOR DETAILS.

4. BELGIAN AMBASSADOR OFFERED GOOD NEWS THAT THE WORST WAS OVER IN BUKAVU AND KIVU. SITUATION WAS STILL GRAVE BUT LESS SO THAN PREVIOUSLY. BELGIANS HAD SENT LARGE AMOUNTS OF MEDICATION AND SPECIAL MEDICAL TEAMS. BELGIAN GOVERNMENT ALSO INTENDED PROVIDE FUNDS FOR FURTHER MEDICAL ACTIVITY. HE ADDED HE WAS IMPRESSED BY EFFECTIVENESS OF BURUNDI GOVERNMENT ANTI-CHOLERA MEASURES DURING PAST THREE WEEKS.

5. LATER IN MORNING U.S., WEST GERMAN AND BELGIAN AMBASSADORS PLUS FRENCH CHARGE AND ACTING FED REP MET TO DISCUSS SITUATION FURTHER. ALL AGREED THAT BURUNDI GOVERNMENT ANTI-CHOLERA EFFORT TO DATE HAD

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BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE, THAT DANGER OF SPREAD OF CHOLERA FROM KIVU WAS REAL, THAT FOREIGN MINSITER'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE WAS VAGUE AND THAT CONSULTATION WITH HEALTH MINISTRY WOULD NOT BE THE BEST WAY TO CLARIFY IT. ALL AGREED CONSULT LATER IN DAY AT BELGIAN EMBASSY, IF POSSIBLE WITH BELGIAN DOCTOR MOST FAMILIAR WITH CURRENT CHOLERA SITUATION AND POTENTIAL THREAT, AND DEVELOP LIST OF PRIORITY NEEDS THAT COULD BE MOST EFFECTIVELY MET BY RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES WITHOUT WASTE SI DUPLICATION.

6. WE SHALL HAVEZ PECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEPARTMENT AFTER THAT CONSULTATION. CONCERNING "SENSITIZATION" OF ZAIRE AUTHORITIES WJ THINK BELGIAN EFFORTS IN KIVU ARE SERVING THAT PURPOSE AND THAT ANY INTERVENTION IN KINSHASA WOULD SIMPLY INVOLVE US IN A BURUNDI/ZAIRE PROBLEM THAT IS MORE POLITICAL THAN SANITARY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, CHOLERA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUJUMB00694
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780256-1230
Format: TEL
From: BUJUMBURA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780641/aaaabjse.tel
Line Count: 110
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2d60c785-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2290424
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BURUNDI REQUESTS ASSISTANCE AGAINST CHOLERA THREAT SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER SUMMONED, U.S., WEST GERMAN AND BELGIAN AMBASSADORS AND FRENCH CHARGE T O REQUEST A
TAGS: EAIR, PEPR, SWEL, TBIO, BY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2d60c785-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014